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TO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 1038  
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RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBOURNE PRIORITY 6869  
RUEHPT/AMCONSUL PERTH PRIORITY 0731  
RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 3518  
INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 4726  
IRAQ COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T STATE 023141

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/11/2034  
TAGS: [AS](#) [IZ](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO AUSTRALIAN QUESTIONS ON IRAQI WMD  
SCIENTIST

REF: A. 09 CANBERRA 000121  
[1](#)B. 08 CANBERRA 309  
[1](#)C. 07 CANBERRA 1795  
[1](#)D. 07 STATE 169818  
[1](#)E. 07 CANBERRA 1651  
[1](#)F. 07 STATE 157364  
[1](#)G. 07 CANBERRA 1217  
[1](#)H. 07 STATE 84894  
[1](#)I. 12/20/2007 CROWLEY-KUCHINSKY E-MAIL AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: ISN/CTR Acting Director PHIL DOLLIFF  
Reasons: 1.4 (b) & (d)

1.(S//NF) SUMMARY: Since 2006, ISN/CTR's Iraq Scientist Engagement Program (ISEP) has engaged former Iraqi WMD scientist Ali Abdul Rahman al-Za'ag through an ISEP-sponsored fellowship at the Jordan University of Science and Technology. With ISEP's encouragement, al-Za'ag applied for an Australian visa in early 2008. The Government of Australia (GOA) denied this visa application. In January 2009, al-Za'ag reapplied for an Australian visa. Subsequently, the GOA inquired whether the USG had any role in al-Za'ag's decision to reapply for an Australian visa. While ISEP currently engages al-Za'ag on a fellowship in Jordan, the USG had no role in al-Za'ag's decision to reapply for an Australian visa.

2.(S//NF) Background: Since 2006, ISN/CTR's Iraq Scientist Engagement Program (ISEP) has engaged Iraqi biologist Ali Abdul Rahman al-Za'ag through an ISEP-sponsored fellowship at the Jordan University of Science and Technology. In early 2008, ISEP sought to relocate al-Za'ag to Australia so that he could work at Victoria University. At the time, the Government of Australia declined the USG's request to grant al-Za'ag a visa, citing "a range of compelling security, immigration and legal reasons." According to CANBERRA 000121, on February 4 the GOA notified Embassy Canberra that al-Za'ag reapplied for an Australian visa at the Australian Embassy in Amman, Jordan on January 21, 2009. The GOA inquired about whether the USG had any role in al-Za'ag's decision to reapply for an Australian visa and al-Za'ag's recent activities.

3.(SBU) Information for the GOA: The State Department's Iraq Scientist Engagement Program continues to support several former Iraqi scientists through temporary relocation fellowships. While ISEP currently engages al-Za'ag on a temporary relocation fellowship in Jordan, the USG had no role in al-Za'ag's recent decision to reapply for an Australian visa. Al-Za'ag's most recent ISEP-sponsored work has focused on developing a report on rebuilding Iraq's scientific infrastructure and developing an Arabic language biosafety checklist. With other funding sources, Al-Za'ag is also pursuing work related to DNA forensics.

CLINTON